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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3010  
RULSDMK/DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIUU/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RHMCSUU/FAA NATIONAL HQ WASHINGTON DC//AWH-10//  
RHMCSUU/FAA MIAMI SO IFO23 MIAMI FL  
RHMFIUU/FAA MIAMI ARTCC MIAMI FL  
RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE  
RUEHMT/AMCONSUL MONTREAL 0069

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000139

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

STATE EEB FOR DAN MOORE, MEGAN WALKLET-TIGHE, KRISTIN GUSTAVSON  
TRANSPORTATION FOR BRIAN HEDBERG  
FAA FOR BONNIE AHUMADA, ANNA SABELLA, KRISTA BERQUIST  
FAA MIAMI FOR JAY RODRIGUEZ  
BRASILIA FOR SHARON WALLOOPPILLAI  
MONTREAL PASS USMISSION TO ICAO

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: GOA REQUESTS FAA SECURITY REASSESSMENT DELAY

Reftel: STATE 9355

¶1. (SBU) Econoff and Defense Attache delivered reftel demarche to Brigadier (two stars) Marcelo Adolfo Ayerdi, the new head of the Comando Regiones Aereas (CRA), February 6. On February 9, Post received a letter response from Ayerdi requesting that the proposed formal reassessment be delayed "no fewer than 60 days" after the proposed dates due to a pending April 1 transfer of civil aviation authority from the CRA to the recently established civilian agency ANAC (National Civil Aviation Administration).

¶2. (SBU) During the February 6 meeting, Ayerdi welcomed an FAA inspection in principle, but cautioned that the proposed FAA reassessment timing would complicate this transfer process, and likened it to consulting with "an owner who is leaving." He stated that his staff is working very hard to meet the April 1 transfer deadline and expressed the concern that hosting this visit would hinder his CRA organization's ability to focus on the many details of the changeover - everything from union workers' issues to lines of authority in the event of a national emergency. Furthermore, he added that ANAC, not the CRA, would be responsible for correcting any problems which were identified and asked, "Can you wait one month?"

¶3. (SBU) PolCouns received a follow-up phone call February 6 from an adviser to the Minister of Defense (MoD) calling the timing of the request "inopportune" due to the pending transfer of civil aviation authority. On February 9, the same adviser clarified to PolOff that the MOD "looks forward to the meeting, wants to hear and address FAA concerns, but must insist that we undertake the consultations anytime after the transfer to civilian authority is complete on April 1, 2009."

¶4. (SBU) On safety issues, CRA head Ayerdi (who has been the head of the CRA for less than one week) stated that ICAO had sent a team for a two-week inspection from November 20 - December 6, 2008. (Note: TSA at Post notes that ICAO sent a security inspection team to Argentina in September 2008. End Note.) He claimed that ICAO gave the Argentine system an "81% rating", and compared that to the 55% he said Uruguay earned, where the inspectors went upon leaving Argentina.

¶5. (SBU) Per Reftel instructions, Post demarched Foreign Ministry Director of Economic Integration Ambassador Galie and Minister Kaminka February 10, using talking points provided. In addition, we have requests in for meetings with Ministry of Planning Secretariat

of Transportation Civil Aviation Director Alba Tomas Hatti and with  
ANAC Director Rodolfo Gabrielli.

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Comment  
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[¶](#)6. (SBU) Argentina is indeed transitioning to civilian leadership of  
its civil aviation authority. As one local official put it, I hope  
the FAA can imagine the effects on their operations of undergoing  
such a transition. Under these circumstances, Post thinks it wise  
to accede to the CRA's request to postpone the assessment mission  
for 60 days.

WAYNE